

Programme of the Eugenics Society of the U.S.A.

At the International Congress of Eugenics held at New York in 1921 steps were taken to form a Eugenics Committee in the United States, Prof. Irving Fisher being then appointed Chairman. Under his vigorous chairmanship very considerably progress has been made, and an Advisory Council containing many names has been appointed. The first outcome of their labours is a Programme for a Eugenic Society which is given below. This, it is intended, will be gradually developed as time goes on.

PROGRAMME

To be gradually developed by the Eugenics Society of the United States of America.

INTRODUCTION.

The general aim of the Society is to forward the practical application of eugenic principles to the improvement of the American population.

The means for accomplishing this aim comprises:

- (1) The promotion of Eugenic research;
- (2) The promotion of Eugenic education;
- (3) The promotion of conservative Eugenic legislation;
- (4) The promotion of Eugenic administration.

RESEARCH.

The most fundamental work of the Society must be, for the present at least, the promotion of (1), Eugenic Research.

We should encourage eugenic research especially in determining the modes in which physical, mental and temperamental traits, are inherited. Such subjects as the existence of determiners for mental qualities and their Mendelian inheritance need a great amount of thorough analytical work. A problem likely to be approached through unwise legislation is that of feeble-mindedness. It deserves special study under the joint direction of eugenists and physicians.

One of the greatest fields of research is in human mutations, especially those of a mental sort. The modern methods of mental tests, when perfected, ought to reveal these. The relation of mutations to inheritance and to the formation of new strains needs prolonged study.

Researches should be made as to the action of differential selection in marriage, of differential fecundity, differential survival, and of differential environment,—education, occupation, modes of life.

The effects of the World War on the race should receive special study. The effort to prevent future wars is a matter of fundamental eugenic concern.

The effects of immigration should be studied with reference to

physique, and intelligence, and with reference to the eugenics or dysgenics of blending different races.

There is, in America, an unusual opportunity for studying the effects—mental and bodily—of hybridization of different races, distant as well as more nearly related. This opportunity should be used. It will be important to separate environmental and genetic effects.

The effects, actual and possible, of birth control should be investigated from the standpoint of eugenics, as distinct from that of feminism, humanitarianism, or ethics.

In relation to the study of differential birthrates, and the connection between a high birthrate and social utility, such a topic as "urbanization" calls for investigation. One of our members says:

"According to the Census, rural districts supply a disproportionately large part of the future population."

"It is estimated that in four generations the 50 per cent. of the present population which is rural *tends* to become 88 per cent. of the total stock. But of course part of the present urban stock will migrate into the country where it may become more prolific, and still more of the rural stock will migrate into the cities and become relatively sterile. The question is, *which* part?"

"On the whole is the migration from the farms to the cities a migration of the superior intelligent and able bodied young people, or of the inferior? If the superior stocks are being, by present tendencies, driven off constantly into the sterile life of city commerce, this constitutes a terrific dysgenic drain upon the population."

"And the answer to this question seems to depend chiefly upon whether American rural life is economically and culturally attractive enough to retain the best stocks and attract new good stock from the cities. Thus farm credits, farmers' co-operatives, community art, suburban life for city workers, favourable agricultural legislation, agricultural colleges and schools, abolition of protective tariffs, etc., would appear to be eugenic measures *par excellence*."

What has been quoted assumes that it is the migration to the city which reduces the birth rate. It is conceivable, of course, that the migration is selective and merely transfers from country to city those who would have small families in any case. The question of which of these two interpretations is the true one should itself be investigated.

The automobile may be a factor in the rural-urban problem as an agency in Eugenics since it tends to reduce in-breeding from promiscuity and to widen the range of marriage selection in rural districts.

An analogous problem is as to the effect of education. Are Universities attracting the most intelligent elements in the population and virtually sterilizing them, both students and teachers?

Universities are still built somewhat on monastic ideas; their best fellowships are not open to married students. They seem to be doing much to limit the propagation of the most intellectual elements in society.

Again does wealth accumulation or wealth inheritance tend toward sterility?

Another problem is, whether trade unionism is a dysgenic agency

(e.g., by levelling income rather than helping adjust income to ability) or a eugenic agency (e.g. by discouraging the immigration of the unfit and insisting on high standards of living).

Research is needed to answer the question whether religion, philanthropy, modern sanitation, and medical progress are really eugenic. If not, how can their vast *social* value be preserved and a *eugenic* value be added?

There is one field of research in which every family may participate, biological genealogy. Thousands of genealogies have been written and hundreds are always in the course of preparation in the United States. Biologically, these represent much misdirected energy. Heretofore, the biological and genealogical outlooks have been different. Until the average genealogist learns to take on the biological viewpoint, his genealogy cannot be used, after he is gone, as a pedigree. The Huntington Family Association should be encouraged to make its records a model of scientific genealogy.

Among the agencies through which we may hope for important results of research are:

- The Eugenics Research Association
- The Eugenics Record Office
- The American Genetic Association
- The Race Betterment Foundation
- The Carnegie Institution of Washington
- The United States Census Office
- The United States Department of Agriculture
- The State Agricultural Experiment Stations
- The United States Children's Bureau
- The United States Women's Bureau
- The United States Immigration Bureau
- The United States Indian Bureau
- The University of Iowa Child Welfare Bureau
- The Station of Juvenile Research, Whittier, Calif.
- The Psychopathic Laboratories in Municipal Courts of Chicago, Detroit, and various other cities
- The American Law Institute, Washington, D.C.
- The Departments of biology, psychology, anthropology, medicine, and sociology in all Universities
- Stanford University, investigating "gifted youths"
- The Family Records Committee of the National Research Council
- The State Board of Public Affairs (Wisconsin Mental Deficiency Survey)
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- United Daughters of the Confederacy
- Daughters of 1812
- Sons of the American Revolution
- Lodges
- Hospitals
- Colonies for epileptics and feeble-minded
- Sanatoria
- Dispensaries

EDUCATION.

The foregoing appeal for further research must not be taken to mean that Eugenic activity is to mark time waiting for the results of research. There is ample present justification for a far reaching Eugenic campaign.

Whenever definite eugenic or dysgenic conditions are clearly established as tendencies, information as to these results must be widely diffused as the basis for practical measures of encouragement or correction.

Important steps in the field of eugenic education should be taken immediately. A widespread and profound interest must be stimulated in the recognition and analysis of the biological factors in civilization.

The first step is to "teach the teachers," to digest existing knowledge of eugenics and get it into the hands of teachers, preachers, lecturers, etc., in a suitable form for retailing to the public.

Under eugenic education, we may distinguish

- (a) formal or scholastic education, through schools and colleges,
- (b) popular education, through the press, and other agencies for reaching the general public.

FORMAL EDUCATION.

Under (a), formal education, the emphasis at present should focus on university and graduate education and the stimulation of special eugenic courses, particularly with a *genetic background* in medical, theological, law, agricultural and teachers' colleges, and the encouragement and training of professional eugenic field workers and investigators in the scientific aspects of eugenics.

Up to the present time physicians have viewed disease almost exclusively in one relation, viz., to the environment. They have regarded the origin of disease as environmental, and concluded that the treatment must be some change of environment. Effort should be made to educate physicians to recognize the relation of disease to innate constitutional qualities.

In Universities, eugenics should be placed in the department of hygiene where one exists; and if plans are in progress to establish a department of hygiene it should be insisted that eugenics be one of the fundamental considerations.

Preparation for the diplomatic and consular services should include instruction in biology and eugenics. Requirements for entrance to Law School and Theological Seminary should include the same courses in biology as for entrance into Medical Schools. It is also important to have eugenics associated with sociology or to make such other combination as seems likely to secure the maximum results under the particular circumstances. Such a course might be a required subject in every College of Education or in every curriculum specially designed for teachers.

In introductory biology, or in zoology courses not preceded by biology, and in ethics, eugenics should command at least five per cent. of the course.

In any case all large Universities should have courses in eugenics, or at least genetics and eugenics in one course.

Psychopathic laboratories attached to Criminal Courts in our large cities where police officers act virtually as agents in bringing in those who commit crime, violate ordinances and who do not conform to normal and required standards of conduct, can be made clinics to which students of medical colleges, law students, and social workers may be invited and where they may be instructed.

Education as to the supreme importance of biological factors in human life should eventually be extended through the entire school system, down to the elementary grades. Pupils in these grades are in the most impressionable years when eugenic ideals can be most firmly established. The essential facts of eugenics should become as familiar as the multiplication table. Individual hygiene and race hygiene should be linked together in the pupils' mind and the greater importance of the latter emphasized.

Care should be taken to square eugenics with rational democratic ideals, by exposing false claims of class superiority and espousing equal opportunity to demonstrate intrinsic merit. The burden and menace to the *average* man and woman, which come from neighbours who are constitutionally feeble-minded, criminal, insane, vicious, or incapable, should be emphasized.

In promoting such systematic education there is need to plan and publish an outline of education, together with a list of suitable textbooks and teachers' manuals with notes on supplementary reading and practical laboratory work on one's own pedigree and other eugenic problems.

Formal education is, in fact, a great untouched field; for eugenic education, up to the present time, is represented by only a few, unco-ordinated, unsystematized, and fragmentary notes and programmes. The education we are seeking should be based upon a genetic foundation rather than a sociological foundation.

POPULAR EDUCATION.

Popular education should be effected through the press, the Science Service and those responsible for policy in the various institutions listed above, also through the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Y.M.H.A., and Y.W.H.A.; The U.S. Army and Navy; the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and other organizations; on the platform, by lectures to ministers and medical societies, and in summer schools, chautauquas, lyceums, university extension societies and teachers' and farmers' institutes, congresses, exhibits, baby shows, moving pictures, etc.

Short talks by radiophone should be arranged. Popular articles, intelligently as well as scientifically presented in Sunday newspapers, can do much to disseminate eugenic information among people generally.

The subject should be handled with earnestness and seriousness and the idea of eugenics as a fad or a joke should be combatted.

Public libraries should be provided with suitable literature, such as booklets with simple, convincing presentation. At present, even medical libraries often lack eugenic literature.

Departments of Health should become eugenic agencies. Eugenics should be preached from the pulpit and be made the subject of drama, fiction and art. We should properly initiate and direct the organization of eugenic conventions and congresses—local, national, and international.

But it is very important that only well established facts should be taught and not premature and possibly socially dangerous hypotheses be given out as facts.

All statements should be cautiously checked to avoid overstatement or too sweeping conclusions.

Constant encouragement for the use of physical and mental tests should be given but only by those thoroughly competent. Besides baby shows, just mentioned, at county fairs, whole family groups should be encouraged to compete with special reference to developing hereditary soundness and fine quality determined by physical and mental—which should include “character”—tests. “Kindness” is one of the most important and most valuable characteristics.

Because mental tests are being developed and standardized to a very accurate and practical degree, it is highly desirable that both general and specialized tests for mental ability be widely used by schools, institutions and societies, and that records of tests be preserved so that the mental development of the particular child may be traced from year to year.

OTHER REMARKS ON EDUCATION.

There are, of course, many other specialized types of activity which eugenics’ education may be expected to cover. The problem of encouraging the recognition of eugenic factors in marriage selection is one which ultimately may be worked out through schools, colleges, Y.M.C.A. organizations and other agencies; but this complicated problem requires a more competent and scientific direction than is at present available.

Incidentally, a practical use of the information derived from the study of traits of individuals will be to better the selection of occupations. The work of the Eastman Music School, in Rochester, in classifying school children as to innate musical ability is an instance. Another is the work of the Civic Club and the Woman’s City Club, in Pittsburgh, in discovering exceptionally able youths and promoting their welfare and education. The work of the Division of Educational Relations of the National Research Council in the detection and care of the exceptional child is important.

A chief result of all eugenic education should be the habit of being “eugenically-minded” in the approach to every problem of statesmanship and social organization but not to the exclusion of other points of view.

The motive force for practical eugenics must be a sound public opinion. In short, the effort should be not simply to impart information but to kindle earnest interest and establish a eugenic attitude and habit of mind. This is what Galton meant when he said that eugenics must become “a religion.”

This education may well start along the lines of hygiene of repro-

duction and communicable diseases. For, while the distinction scientifically between Social Hygiene and Eugenics is a sharp one, they must necessarily be closely associated in the mind of the parent under the common thought of his duty to posterity. Efforts to keep the two subjects totally distinct will not only surely fail but may do damage to one or the other of two movements, both important. What is needed is to build the higher ideal of eugenic duty on foundations already laid for us by the Social Hygiene movement.

The same remarks apply to the hygiene movement generally. From a pedagogic standpoint the most effective procedure is not to antagonize hygiene but to extend it beyond the individual and the present generation. Eugenics will develop most rapidly as race hygiene, an outgrowth of hygiene in the ordinary narrow interpretation of the term. We should endeavour to show that eugenics supplies the most effective and permanent solution of the problems which have been so ineffectually dealt with hitherto by physicians, public health officers, social workers, clergymen and reformers,—the problems of combatting disease, disability, defectiveness, degeneracy, delinquency, vice and crime. Moreover such a policy of co-operation should have the effect of converting much hygienic effort now distinctly dysgenic into effective eugenic influences.

LEGISLATION.

Legislation in many fields has been systematized to such an extent that codes covering the legal aspects of specialized groups of interests and activities have been developed. For instance, many states have recently developed a sanitary code; there is also a criminal code, an educational, a financial, and a highway code, but the laws having for their purpose, the conservation of the best stocks of the race have not yet been brought together, systematized and rewritten into an "eugenic code."

Prior to urging much eugenic legislation we should develop, in co-operation with the Eugenics Research Association, an "eugenic code," and prior to actual legislation, public opinion should be educated. Such a code should consider carefully the following fields of legislation so far as they relate to the conservation of the race through eugenics:

- (a) laws relating to marriage and divorce; for instance, infertility on either side, or any other seriously dysgenic inheritable defect, should be made honourable ground for divorce; the minimum age for marriage should be set at, say 18,
- (b) laws concerned with illegitimacy,
- (c) laws providing for farm colonies for the segregation of the criminal defective and for other needed segregation,
- (d) laws providing, in certain cases, for sterilization,
- (e) laws regulating immigration on the basis of superiority to the American average by mental test, and, if found practical, descent from parents known not to be of dysgenic types.
- (f) possible amendment of immigration laws adding mental and physical tests to the literacy and three per cent. restrictions

with a passing score of, say, the median in the Alpha test, or corresponding equivalent score in approved tests; such tests should be given in the native tongue of the immigrant.

(g) if found practicable, the bonding provision for families, communities, states and nations against the production of defectives,

(h) mothers' pensions and laws and subsidies in relation to differential fecundity,

(i) laws encouraging parenthood on the part of those best endowed with hereditary traits,

(j) laws encouraging differential salaries on basis of size and quality of families, at least in private organizations, such as endowed universities,

(k) laws providing for state bureaus of eugenics,

(l) laws providing for eugenic education,

(m) laws providing for the systematic mental testing of children at ten years and sixteen years,

(n) laws removing or reducing the present restrictions on information and materials for the prevention of conception,

(o) laws, treaties, and other international agreements, such as the League of Nations, improving international relations and reducing the outbreak and spread of war,

(p) laws on taxation,

(q) labor legislation, e.g., regarding women and children in industry and laws on wages, hours, housing and conditions of work,

(r) laws providing for registration of family pedigrees; in time the most thoroughly prepared and most carefully preserved of all public records will not be title deeds to land but human pedigree records emphasizing the biological aspects significant as giving data of value in estimating transmissible qualities and all activities and functions which bear heavily upon race betterment. Ultimately a card index system should be worked out in connection with the registration of births, marriages, and deaths by which each person's ancestry can be traced.

After such a code is developed, the legislative division of our Society, which division should represent sound legal, biological, psychological and economic opinion, could well exert its energies toward popularizing this code, and in demonstrating its value to the legislatures of the several states and the federal government. Enactments of laws should wait upon exact determinations of facts.

ADMINISTRATION.

The better administration of existing eugenic laws should be sought as well as the better administration of voluntary agencies which have eugenic work to do.

If applied eugenics ever accomplishes very much in the United States it will require the use of much better institutional, court, social organization, and educational *rosters* than those which are at present maintained. There should be prepared and kept up-to-date a roster for every court, organization, and custodial institution concerned with

the socially inadequate. There should also be made an effort to standardize institutional records with reference to uniformity, comparability, and availability of data for statistical and biological analysis. Extension of registration areas, increase in number and efficiency of bureaus of vital statistics, rosters of schools giving courses in eugenics, persons especially concerned in eugenic studies, members of eugenics' societies, lecturers and persons available for eugenic instruction, professional eugenic field workers, institutions conducting eugenic research as a part of their routine work—all such rosters are needed by any effective eugenics' society, and the need is so great that it justifies the maintenance of rosters as one of the primary divisions of the Society's work.

ORGANIZATION.

To carry out the foregoing programme, it is proposed that the Society should ultimately have the following standing committees:

- (1) Committee on Organization
- (2) Committee on Survey
- (3) Committee on Research
- (4) Committee on Formal or Scholastic Education
- (5) Committee on Popular Education, Congresses and Conventions
- (6) Committee on Eugenic Birth Control.
- (7) Committee on Legislation.
- (8) Committee on Crime Prevention.
- (9) Committee on Rosters.
- (10) Committee on Biologic Genealogy.
- (11) Committee on Finances.
- (12) Committee on Publicity.

The foregoing report, in its present form, has had the benefit of numerous suggestions from the Advisory Council. It is, however, still tentative, and further suggestions are invited from all who may be interested.

Most of the proposals will, of necessity, have to await their turn for consideration, not only because funds and workers are, as yet, scarce but also because many of the proposals require research as the first step or cannot be put into effect until more facts are ascertained without shadow of doubt.